

climber that allowed him to make enormous contributions to the National Park Service technical rescue program. Jim helped develop some of the first organized technical rescue courses at Joshua Tree National Park and for 7 years was a lead instructor for the National Park Service Technical Rescue Course, which is taught annually at Canyonlands National Park.

Before coming to Great Basin, Jim served as the chief ranger at Devils Tower National Monument in Wyoming. The former superintendent of Devils Tower recalls Jim as an outstanding liaison to both the climbing community and to the American Indian community. In addition to his tours of duty at Great Basin, Joshua Tree and Devils Tower, Jim also served as a ranger at Shoshone National Forest, Denali National Park and Rocky Mountain National Park.

Jim Schlinkmann was a man who dedicated himself to protecting the very best of America's lands and who represented the very best of America's spirit.

I will miss seeing him on my next visit to Great Basin National Park. And I will be thinking about him the next time I look up at the remarkable snow-covered peaks of the south Snake Range.

COMMEMORATING THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF SANDY LEE AVANTS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, today I rise to honor a woman who has dedicated herself to serving the people of Nevada and who has left a lasting impact through her work in government.

Ms. Sandy Lee Avants was born and raised in Phoenix, AZ. Following graduation from Arizona State University, she moved to Las Vegas. As a testament to Sandy's character, within the first month of her residence in Las Vegas, she immediately became involved in the local community through service clubs.

Sandy has had success both in her professional life and in public service. Following a prosperous private business enterprise, she began her career in Nevada's government when Senator Richard Bryan was serving as Governor. Governor Bryan then appointed Sandy to be chairman of the State of Nevada's Commission on Ethics in 1983 and in 1986 appointed her as the administrator of the Real Estate Division. In 1987, Sandy became the first woman to head a State law enforcement agency when she became the administrator of the Taxicab Authority.

Sandy's accomplishments came at a time when Nevada needed them the most. Her most recent appointment was to the Transportation Service Authority, TSA, in Nevada, where she served as the deputy commissioner, commissioner, and chairwoman. At TSA, she administered and enforced Nevada's law related to passenger transportation, household goods move-

ment, and car towing companies. Additionally, she ensured that consumers utilizing these services were protected. Sandy has met the needs of a rapidly growing public and shown her professionalism and commitment to Nevada and its people.

Those are a few of the many visible contributions that Sandy made to the community, but her most important contributions were made outside of the public eye. Sandy was a founding member and president of the Greater Las Vegas Women's League. She is also a founding member of the International Association of Transportation Regulators, and a Community Advisory Board at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. During her time in Nevada, Sandy enrolled in various courses at the National Judicial College and received certification as an administrative law judge and mentor. From 1999 through 2002, Sandy worked closely with me in Washington, DC, creating congressional legislation to improve transportation in Nevada.

I have known Sandy for many years and recognize the many contributions she has made to the community. Sandy's hard work and character have left a lasting impression on our State and community.

Sandy recently retired from the Nevada State government, but I am sure that she will continue working in public service through her numerous volunteer positions. The State of Nevada is fortunate to have Sandy Avants. I offer her my gratitude and wish her all the best as she embarks on new endeavors.

FULL FUNDING FOR PANDEMIC FLU PREPAREDNESS

Mr. REID. Earlier today, Senator FRIST spoke about the importance of preparing our Nation for the serious and growing threat of an influenza pandemic.

Members of this body made pandemic flu a priority when it unanimously adopted an \$8 billion amendment to combat avian flu offered by Senate Democrats.

I hope that Senator FRIST will join me in standing by this commitment and will work to ensure that Congress provides for the full \$8 billion America needs to begin addressing this critical issue before we adjourn.

The avian flu has spread to 15 countries and killed 70 of the 137 individuals it has infected. Scientists are warning that it is only a matter of time before this virus mutates to a new strain that will allow for sustained human-to-human transmission and cause the next pandemic.

The human and economic impact of an influenza pandemic on our Nation would be devastating.

According to a recent report by the Congressional Budget Office, a severe flu pandemic could infect 90 million U.S. residents and 2 million would die.

Thirty percent of the workforce would become ill and those who sur-

vived would miss 3 weeks of work. This lost productivity and decrease in consumer spending could cause a \$675 billion reduction in U.S. gross domestic product and move the Nation into a recession.

Perhaps the only thing more troubling than the human and economic consequences of an avian flu pandemic is the fact that our Nation is dangerously unprepared to deal with it.

We are not dedicating enough resources to global surveillance activities that allow us to detect and contain an outbreak of avian flu.

If we are unable to contain a pandemic overseas, our strongest defense at home will be an effective vaccine. However, our domestic vaccine manufacturing capacity is so inadequate it could take nearly a year to produce and distribute a vaccine.

Effective drugs that can slow the spread of a pandemic until a vaccine is developed are only available for 2 percent of our population.

Finally, all of these problems are compounded by the fact that our public health infrastructure cannot handle a pandemic and the medical community, businesses, and general public must be better prepared for a pandemic.

All of these facts are reasons why Congress must immediately address the avian flu threat and why the Senate voted to do just that earlier this year.

I am troubled by reports that congressional Republicans are on the verge of approving about half of the amount approved by the Senate.

Senator FRIST rightly pointed out that the threat of pandemic flu is not and should not be a partisan issue. A pandemic strain of flu will not distinguish between Democrats or Republicans.

That is why I hope that Senator FRIST will stand with me and will continue to fight for the full funding level approved by the Senate so our Government may begin to prepare and protect our Nation from this looming threat.

STEM CELL THERAPEUTIC AND RESEARCH ACT

Mr. BROWNBACK. Mr. President, I rise to speak on the Stem Cell Therapeutic and Research Act of 2005, which would establish a national cord blood stem cell bank. This legislation was agreed to last night during wrap-up under unanimous consent.

I would like to congratulate the majority leader and all parties involved in yesterday's achievement, which resulted in passage of the cord blood bill. As you will recall, it was just 2 days ago that the other side, through the junior Senator from Iowa, reaffirmed their objections to consideration of this important legislation.

Their objections, it seems, were not substantive as this legislation has been championed by Members from both sides of the aisle and as further evidenced by the lifting of objections and